

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P. O. Box 267, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934

PH# (979) 732-2423 Fax (979) 733-0489

E-mail: admin@splctx.org www.splctx.com **Pastor:** pastor.akethan@gmail.com

August 19 & 20, 2023

Twelfth Sunday of Pentecost

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Congregational Chair			Donna Maas
St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			Tomasa Rosales
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon
Organist			Elena Holub

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor (Luke 10:27)

VISION STATEMENT: We will work to strengthen and grow closer in relationship to God and to one another.

➤ *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*

We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshipping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.

➤ *Hearing Assist devices are available for those who need assistance in hearing worship service better. Please see a person in the Sound Room (Usher Room) to request the use of a device during worship.*

* This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.

INTRODUCTION

In Isaiah we hear that God's house shall be a house of prayer for all people and that God will gather the outcasts of Israel. The Canaanite woman in today's gospel is a Gentile, an outsider, who is unflinching in her request that Jesus heal her daughter. As Jesus commends her bold faith, how might our church extend its mission to those on the margins of society? In our gathering around word and meal we receive strength to be signs of comfort, healing, and justice for those in need.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGNING OF ATTENDANCE PADS

(Ushers will be handing out Attendance Pads during the announcements. Please be sure to sign your name and contact information.)

60 SECONDS OF STEWARDSHIP – Property Team

*** CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors, first privately then together publicly.

Silence for reflection and private confession of personal sins, then join in with combined voices this printed confession.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P God is a cup of cold water when we thirst. God offers boundless grace when we fail. Claim the gift of God's mercy: you are freed and forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

*** HYMN ELW - #641 "All Are Welcome"**

1. Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live, a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive. Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

REFRAIN:

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

2. Let us build a house where prophets speak, and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

REFRAIN:

*All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

3. Let us build a house where love is found in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us: **REFRAIN**

4. Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger: **REFRAIN**

5. Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter: **REFRAIN**

Text: Marty Haugen Music: Marty Haugen Text and Music © 1994 GIA Publications, Inc.

* **GREETING**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be
with you all.

C And also with you.

* **KYRIE** *(Responses Sung)*

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of
all, let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the
Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



C A - men

* **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P God of all peoples, your arms reach out to embrace all those who call upon you. Teach us as
disciples of your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that your name may
be known throughout the earth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #592 "Just As I Am, without One Plea"**
{This is one of your favorite hymns. Please read the brief history found in the back of the bulletin.}

1. **Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**
2. **Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt, fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**
3. **Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve; because thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**
4. **Just as I am; thy love unknown has broken ev'ry barrier down; now to be thine, yea, thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.**

CCLI Song #23206 Words: Charlotte Elliott Music: William Batchelder Bradbury
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* APOSTLES' CREED

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Confident that God receives our joys and concerns, let us offer our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

A You call leaders to bridge differences and practice generosity. Inspire all in authority to protect people in harm's way, deliver those in bondage, support fair elections, and show mercy to those for whom they have responsibility. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for farmers and ranchers as they continue to work hard to bring us food in this time of drought. Bless them as they sow crops and care for livestock. Send us rain to heal the earth and water to quench Your thirsty land. Let faith be born from our doubts, hope from our despair, and compassion from our troubles. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine, Sudan and Niger. Bring an end to wars and the destruction of lives and your creation. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for the family and friends of Donna Culton, Gerion Nelson and Juanita Luedecke who passed away this past week. Be with them and comfort them during this difficult time. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Edna Supak; Ed Thraen; George Krenek; Virginia Fritsch; Eugene Darden; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you (*Pause*). Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for all those battling cancer and especially for:
Ann Dimas; Carl Geisler; Laura Walla; Dorothy Wicke; Randy Wendt; Heather Deviney; Michelle Thraen; Lydia Rojas; Paul Casinger; Dr. Tom Hancher; Leonard Kahlden; and Bob Loy that they may know comfort and strength. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for all expectant mothers, and especially for:
Olivia Leyendecker; Cassidy Zajicek Parks; Courtney Busselman; Nancy Gorman; Camille Stancik; and Kyndall Beettner that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace. Hear us, O God.

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for:
Melvin Otto; Joey Denby; Edwin Oevermann; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Coy Dell Schindler; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Jane Booker; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmer; Donna Dehmer; and Cherie Moore that they receive your caring and compassion. Hear us, O God

C **Your mercy is great.**

A We pray for all law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers, 9-1-1 dispatchers, and active duty military personnel that they are protected and kept safe. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)* Hear us, O God.

Law Enforcement Officers: Charles Jobb; Joseph Smith; Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Travis Neuendorff; Brenda Henkes; Jan Willette; and Terri Neunendorff, as well as those active duty military members including Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Dalton Kapel; and Kevin Gonzalez.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for the church throughout the world. May we all proclaim the good news of your love effectively. We ask, especially, that you would bless the ministry of our sister congregations Cristo Rey and their leader Armando Capcha and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad and their leaders Pastors Gumer and Naomi Anton in Peru, all Missionaries, especially St. Paul's supported missionary, Dina Anton de Espinoza, and our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We give you thanks for those who now rest from their labors. Motivate us by their lives of dedication to the gospel, until that day when we join with them in our eternal home. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, in the name of the one who reconciled all creation to himself, Jesus Christ our Savior.

C Amen.

*** PEACE**

P The peace of the risen Lord be with you always.

C And also with you. *(Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.)*

(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their

worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

*** OFFERTORY** *(Sung)*



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

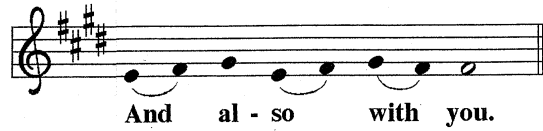
*** OFFERING PRAYER**

P God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us with what we give back to your work, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

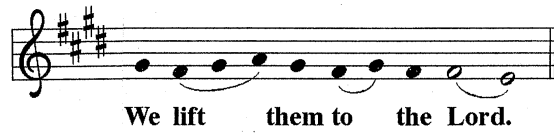
C Amen.

* **GREAT THANKSGIVING** (Responses Sung)

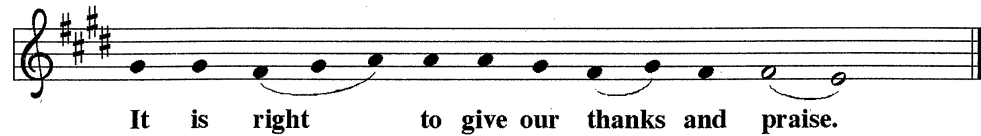
P The Lord be with you.



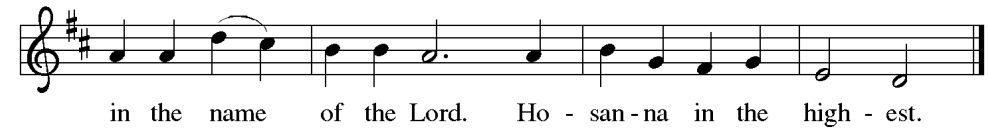
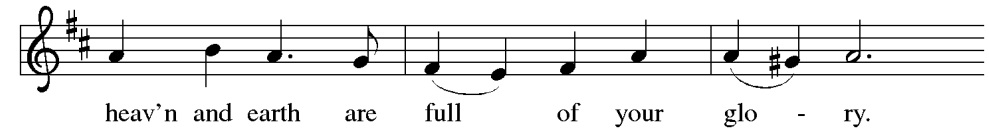
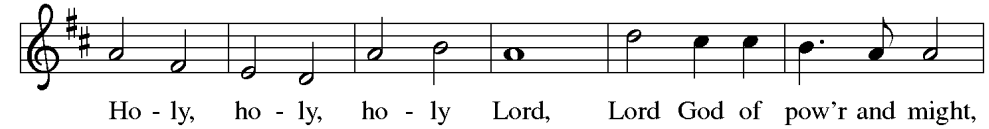
P Lift up your hearts.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



* **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

* **LORD'S PRAYER**

P Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

* **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P All people are called to Christ's table. Come and receive Jesus.

C **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Kneeling at Rail)

{You will be coming forward to the rail for distribution. **All are welcome for communion.** You will be ushered down the center aisle beginning in the front. Fill in at the railings starting at the side and work your way around to the center, then kneel if you are able. Pastor will hand out the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor “Gluten-free, please.” Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. An acolyte follows with an empty tray for you to place your empty individual cup. After receiving communion, please remain at the rails until Pastor has dismissed the entire table with a blessing. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

* **BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

P Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

* **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

* **BLESSING (DOXOLOGY) ELW - #884 “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”**
(Melody is found in #883.)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

CCLI Song #56204 Words: Thomas Ken Music: Louis Bourgeois
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* **HYMN EWL - #759 “My Faith Looks Up to Thee”**
{This is one of your favorite hymns. Please read the brief history found in the back of the bulletin.}

1. **My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine!**

**Now hear me while I pray, take all my guilt away,
oh, let me from this day be wholly thine!**

2. **May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire;**

**as thou hast died for me, oh, may my love to thee
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire!**

3. **While life's dark maze I tread and griefs around me spread, be thou my guide;
bid darkness turn to day, wipe sorrow's tears away,
nor let me ever stray from thee aside.**

4. **When ends life's transient dream, when death's cold, sullen stream shall o'er me roll;
blest Savior, then, in love fear and distrust remove;
oh, bear me safe above, a ransomed soul!**

CCLI Song #43334 Words: Ray Palmer Music: Lowell Mason
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* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. You are loved.

C **Thanks be to God, and we will.**

POSTULDE

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USHERS: SAT: JoAnn Venghaus; Emily Frank; Sammy Cox

SUN: David Johnson; Byron Marburger; Brad Hajdik; Debbie Yancey

LAY READERS: SAT: Audrey Rester

SUN: Brad Hajdik

ACOLYTE:

SUN: Madison McRee

STREAMING:

SUN: Tiffany Lauzon

SOUND:

SUN: Sydney Eaton

ALTAR GUILD: JoAnn Venghaus and Sharon Johnson

WELCOME: Paul writes: “The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Romans 11:29, NRSV). God has called you, so receive his gifts for you today: his love, his forgiveness, his life.

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by Charlene Morrison in loving memory of husband Don Morrison for the anniversary of his August 18th birthday and in honor of daughter Linda Morrison for her August 3rd birthday.

ADDITIONAL FLOWERS are placed by George & Edna Bergfeld in thanks for God's many blessings and in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary on August 18.

We extend our Christian sympathy to Debbie Hernandez and family for the loss of her brother-in-law Gerion Nelson. May God comfort them during their time of loss.

We also extend our Christian sympathy to the family and friends of Juanita Luedecke who passed away August 17, 2023. May God comfort them during their time of loss.

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for you to place your offering in. This includes “Power of One” dollars.

Amount needed for average weekly budgeted expenses: \$8,405.00

Attendance: Aug. 12 & 13, 2023 – 215

Contributions: Aug. 12 & 13 – \$8,177.01

Power of One: Aug. 12 & 13, 2023 – \$34.00

Building Fund: Aug. 12 & 13 – \$233.23

Thank you to those who contributed to last week's offerings. Loving God/Loving Neighbor.

* **FAVORITE HYMN:** “Just As I Am, without One Plea” by Charlotte Elliott

In 1835, Charlotte Elliott wrote the first four verses of this favorite hymn. In 1836 a fifth verse was added from in her hymn “Hours of Sorrow Cheered and Comforted”. She was an invalid suffering physical, emotional, and spiritual pain. Her brother, the Rev. H. V. Elliott, had a plan for a school to provide higher education for daughters of clergy. A bazaar was to be held to fund the school. The activities offered could be enjoyed by everyone except Charlotte, who was physically unfit for everything.

The night before the bazaar she could not sleep. . . she was distressed of her uselessness. The day of the bazaar, while she was home alone, she wrote (for her own comfort) the “formula of her faith”. In her final verse she included the gospel of pardon, peace, and heaven. She felt useful and accepted in her Beloved “Just As I Am” for all eternity. In 1838, she published this hymn in her *Invalid's Hymn Book*.

This hymn has been sung to at least four different tunes. The one we sing today was written by prolific hymn writer William B. Bradbury.

* **FAVORITE HYMN:** “My Faith Looks Up to Thee” by Ray Palmer

Ray Palmer, the author of “My Faith Looks Up to Thee” was born in 1808. He grew up and attend university in the Boston area. He taught at women's schools in New York and New Haven before studying theology. He was ordained in 1835.

He was only 22 when he wrote this hymn, and he said, “The words of the hymn were born of my own soul.” Others have described it as the “greatest hymn written in America”.

Just before the Civil War, eight Christian soldiers were praying in a tent and found comfort in the final verse. Fearing death, they each copied that verse and signed it, then sent it as a message to comfort their families. The next morning, seven of the soldiers were killed.

Palmer felt the success of the hymn was attributed to its “... simple language which is most central in all true Christian experience ... entrusting the individual soul to Him entirely and forever.”

After reading Palmer's hymn, Lowell Mason wrote the music overnight. Lowell Mason's tune was named OLIVET and was written while he was working as a bank clerk. He wrote more than 1,600 tunes and is called the “father of American church music”.

ATTENTION: Names on the prayer list *in the bulletin* will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.

► **Children's Activity Bags** are available for use by our young members and guests! You can find them on the coat hooks in the coat area of the narthex. After worship, **please place the used activity bags and their contents in the receptacle in the narthex.**

Thank you! ☺



PRAYER LISTS: As you know from recent church and bulletin announcements as well as the August newsletter, we asked for your help to update our prayer lists. As of August 15, our lists have been cut down considerably. If you would like to have someone added back to the lists, please contact the church office. You can stop by in person, call at 979-732-2423 or send an email to admin@splctx.org. Thank you!



Acolyte Training: Becoming an acolyte is a wonderful way to serve God and your church. Being an acolyte is open for youth entering the 3rd grade and older, able to reach the altar, able to pay attention to the flow of service and capable of assisting with communion trays. Acolyte training will be held **Sunday, August 20, 2023 at 10:00 AM in the sanctuary.** *Parents, please plan to attend this training with your child so you may be able to help if there are questions later on.* Please text or email Stephanie to let her know you will be attending. If your child is interested in becoming an acolyte but cannot make it to this training, please contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858 or stephaniepolasek@yahoo.com.



ST. PAUL SENIOR EXPLORERS ARE GOING TO THE ASTROS! The Astros will be playing the Boston Red Sox on **Thursday, August 24, 2023.** Game time is 1:10 PM. We will **depart St. Paul at 10:00 AM,** stop and eat brunch at Cracker Barrel, and arrive comfortably at Minute Maid Park before game time. The grey area is that we think we can get pretty good tickets for \$30-\$50, depending on how many are going and the Astros' performance. We will call everyone before buying tickets if they are going to cost more than that. Call Kevin Page with any questions at 979-732-0845.

► **New Members/Informational Class:** Are you interested in joining St. Paul Lutheran Church or just getting more information about the ministries here? If so, come to the next New Members/Informational Class on **Saturday, August 26, 2023 from 9:00-11:30 AM.** We will meet in the church library. Please let the church office (979-732-2423) know that you are planning to attend.

◆ **God's Gals** will meet **Sunday, August 27, 2023 at 6:00 PM at Los Cabos** in Columbus for food, fellowship, and visiting!! All women of St. Paul Lutheran are invited. Bring a friend! Questions? Please contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127. ◆

Men In Mission: Men In Mission is a group of men of all ages who meet each month in The Lighthouse. Breakfast is served, which typically includes conversations pertaining to sports, the arts, entertainment, etc.. We then have a short devotion, discussion, then close with the Lord's Prayer. If you are seeking a closer connection to the men of St. Paul, this is an excellent way to do so. You will make friends for life. Come join us on **Saturday, September 9, 2023 at 8:00 AM!**



Colorado County Fair Concessions!! The St. Paul Lutheran Youth and St. Paul Christian Learning Academy once again have been given the opportunity to take on the concession stand this year at the Colorado County Fair. This is such a beneficial fundraiser and a lot of fun working with everyone! We are excited to again be a part of this community event, however, it is a big task, and we will need your help. The carnival and rodeo will be **September 14, 15, & 16, 2023**, and we will cover all three days from **3:00 PM to 10:00 PM**. A shift and cooker schedule is posted in the narthex (foyer) as well as other ways you can volunteer to help with this fundraiser. If you are a good cook, cashier, organizer, supply runner or just have a heart for serving, we need you! All proceeds will go to support the St. Paul Lutheran youth programs and the St. Paul Christian Learning Academy. If you would like to know more or be a part of the planning team, please contact Stephanie Polasek at 979-732-1858.

♥♥ Our next **Marriage Course** will be every Sunday, **September 17-October 29, 2023**. On these Sunday nights from **6:00-8:00 PM** in the Lighthouse this seven-week course will take place. We realize that strong marriages make strong families, and strong families make strong communities. The Marriage Course is relevant for any couple wanting to invest in their relationship and make it stronger. Whether you have been married four months, 40 years or cohabitating and not married; you feel your marriage is fine, good, great, struggling or stuck; this course is for you. The course is more like a date night. There will be dinner and dessert mixed in with video presentations and discussion questions for you and your partner. You will not be asked to share anything about your relationship with anyone but your partner. **Cost is \$150** – this includes meals, workbooks and video materials. If you need childcare, the cost is an additional \$35 for the seven weeks. This course is limited to 11 couples. Sign up in the office or call Elena Monday-Friday during business hours to get your name on the list. When you sign up, please indicate if you will need childcare.



CONNECTED TO CHRIST: It's the beginning of a new school year, and we need **names and addresses for all of our 2023 high school graduates and all others that are still in college!** Connected to Christ is a ministry of St. Paul that keeps our new graduates and college students connected to St. Paul with fun, Christian-based mailings four times a year. So students and/or family members, please send the name and address of your student to either Terri Brasher at (979)-732-1127, Stephanie Polasek at (979)-732-1858 or the church office. Thank you!



Pictures Needed!! I am in the process of changing all song backgrounds to royalty-free pictures for Power Point. Please send me any pictures of backgrounds (trees, rivers, oceans, mountains, etc.) you may have taken on your vacation. You can email them to peggeisler@gmail.com. Thanks! – Peggy Geisler

♥ **Grief Support Group:** Are you experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one, loss of a job, loss of friend who has moved? The Grief Support Group is a place to share and discuss these issues with other individuals. The group meets the **third Thursday of each month from 5:30-6:30 PM in the church library**. For questions or more information, contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Today (Aug. 20) – 10:00 AM – Acolyte Training (sanctuary)
Mon., Aug. 21 – **CLA Preschool Begins!!**
9:30 AM – Staff Meeting
1:00 PM – Nursing Home Team to TLC
6:00 PM – Church Council
Tues., Aug. 22 – 9:00 AM-12:00 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse)
12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)
6:00 PM – CLA Board
Wed., Aug. 23 – 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
10:00 AM – Nursing Home Team to Columbus Oaks
2:00 PM – Nursing Home Team to The Oaks
5:00 PM – Meal
5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation & HS Youth
Thurs., Aug. 24 – 10:00 AM – SR. Explorers to Astros Game, Houston
10:00-11:30 AM – Manna for Moms (Lighthouse)
Fri., Aug. 25 – 10:30 AM – Adult Bible Study (library)
Sat., Aug. 26 – 9:00-11:30 AM – New Member Class (library)
7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship
Next Sun., Aug. 27 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship
6:00 PM – God's Gals to Los Cabos, Columbus

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Sunday, August 20, 2023 Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, died 1153

Bernard, a Cistercian monk, was a man of great spirituality who wrote mystical works and criticized those whom he thought took an overly intellectual approach to the faith. He became an abbot, and wrote several hymns that are still beloved today.

Thursday, August 24, 2023 Bartholomew, Apostle

Mentioned as one of Jesus' disciples in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Bartholomew's name is replaced in John's gospel by Nathanael, leading many to believe that the two are different names for the same person. Little is known about his work, though some traditions place him later in India or Armenia.

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SERVICE OVERVIEW: PERSISTENT BEGGARS

Marginalized like the Canaanite woman or not, we are all beggars before God. Paul reminds the Romans that all are “imprisoned in disobedience” and dependent on God. In light of that stark truth, our sense of “insider” and “outsider” should crumble in the face of our common need and God’s abundant mercy to all. Instead of dividing people between those who have a place at the table and those who get crumbs, we have an opportunity to share hospitality with our fellow beggars.

It can be challenging to see ourselves as beggars. Today the Canaanite woman becomes our model, as she persists with both humility and audacity. As disciples of Jesus and “beggars” for God’s grace, we live the same paradox of humility and audacity, boldly coming to Jesus and humbly acknowledging our need. Even though crumbs from God’s table would be enough for us, we are offered instead the abundance of Jesus’ own self in bread and wine and invited to share this abundance with insider and outsider alike.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

A beggar’s faith focuses not on what is accomplished or believed, but rather on what is *received: the healing and sustenance desperately longed for and needed*. Today, an outsider argues her case before Jesus. In the end, she is blessed. Welcome to worship! Join all the other beggars for mercy at the Master’s table.

The Canaanite woman is desperate. She begs for Jesus’ healing for her daughter. She is denied a place at the table at first, but she will accept even “crumbs” in the faith that Jesus’ healing power and love are intended even for her. As an outsider, she is stuck in the margins of Jesus’ mission to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Jesus’ eventual response to her beggar’s faith reveals that the love of God encompasses *even* the margins.

Jesus says, “It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” Reflect on a time you said something you wished you hadn’t said. How might you have spoken differently? Next time you encounter a similar situation, how might you approach your speech with more care? As baptized children of God, we are called to stretch ourselves beyond our comfort zones to radically love and advocate for the care and respect of all God’s creation. As a church, we are to reach out to those on the margins of society.

“For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples” (Isaiah 56:7). It is always tempting to find ways to keep people out. We find reasons for those on the inside to belong and those on the outside to be kept at a distance. Isaiah offers this reminder throughout the second

reading: God’s intention is a blessing for all the peoples of the earth. Jesus forces us all to take a good hard look at our own actions. We are all responsible for the words coming out of our mouths and the decisions we make. Thanks be to God that our hope is not in our own righteousness but in the grace of God coming to us through the cross!

KID STUDY:

Do you have a dog? Do you ever feed them scraps from the table? Most veterinarians say that you should not feed your dog table scraps. Why? They say that table scraps are not intended for dogs and may not provide what a dog needs. That may be true, but just try to convince your dog of that as they sit by the table watching you enjoy a cheeseburger. The meal was not intended for your dog, but that doesn't keep them from sitting by the table, begging for a little scrap, hoping that just one small bite might fall on the floor. Keep that picture in your mind as you listen to our Bible lesson today.

When Jesus came to earth, he came to preach and teach first to the Jewish people. That does not mean that He didn't love the other people of the world, but the first priority in his ministry on earth was to reach out to the Jewish people, who were considered to be chosen. When other people saw Jesus healing the sick and lame, they also followed him wherever he went. One day a woman who was not Jewish came to Jesus and asked him to heal her daughter. Jesus explained to the woman that his first mission on earth was to preach to the people of Israel. The woman refused to give up. She came closer, knelt down, and begged, *“Please help me, Lord!”* Jesus was so touched by her faith, he healed her daughter. Even though Jesus came first to the Jew, he loved us so much that he shared his love with all of us. Give thanks today that God shared Jesus with the whole world!

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

Be faithful in prayer, and in the fulfillment of this duty, you will find all the rest sustained and rendered easy. If you are a sinner, pray: it was through prayer alone that the publican and the sinful woman obtained the grace of a thorough penitence. If you are righteous, still pray: by prayer Job and David persevered to the end. If you live amid sinners, and your duty does not permit you to withdraw yourself from the sight of their irregularities, pray; the three children in the flames, and Jonah in the belly of a monster, found safety only through prayer. If you live in retirement, pray: solitude itself becomes a rock if a continual intercourse with God does not defend us against ourselves. If established in the church for the instruction of the people, pray: all the power and success of your ministry depends upon your prayers. However you are, in prosperity or in indigence, in joy or in affliction, in trouble or in peace, in fervency or in despondency, pray. Prayer is the safety of all stations, the consolation of all sorrows, the duty of all conditions, the soul of piety, the support of faith, the grand foundation of religion. - Jean Massillon [Jean Massillon, in 20 Centuries of Great Preaching, ed. Clyde E. Fant, Jr. and William M. Pinson, Jr. (Waco, TX: Word, 1971), II, 446-447.]

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Next Week's Theme (Aug. 26 & 27): Peter's confession / Jesus is the Christ

Next Week's Scriptures (Aug. 26 & 27):

First Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6

"The enduring foundation of God's salvation."

Psalm: Psalm 138

"O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever." (Ps. 138:8)

Second Reading: Romans 12:1-8

"One body in Christ, with gifts that differ."

Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

"The profession of Peter's faith."